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Re: Japanese

April  
Twenty-second  
1942

Honorable Herbert B. Maw  
Governor, State of Utah  
Salt Lake City, Utah

My dear Governor Maw:

I thank you for your letter of April 13, 1942, which contains many valuable suggestions with respect to the problems arising through the evacuation of tens of thousands of Japanese from coastal areas and their location in the several western states.

As you say, we are good soldiers and will abide by the decision of the Federal authorities in the matter and will extend whole hearted cooperation to them in every practicable manner.

I strongly feel, as you state, that whenever possible, the state governments should be advised of contemplated movements of large numbers of alien evacuees inside their boundaries as far in advance as possible. This is necessary in order that we may take the proper and essential steps to prepare for such action. It is even possible that because of our familiarity with local conditions, we might be able to offer the Army commands some practical suggestions.

The handling of evacuees is primarily a Federal responsibility, it is true, and I believe as you do that often the states are in best position to give advice concerning the services that evacuees are required to perform. Certainly, they should be made to be self-supporting insofar as possible, and such labor as they perform should also contribute to the defense effort whenever practicable.



Honorable Herbert B. Maw  
Page Two

April 22, 1942

I do not insist, at this time, on a program that following victory the Federal government should be required to return the evacuees to their former places of residence. I feel that the matter of returning Japanese aliens to the land of their birth is probably the best solution and that the question of disposal of citizens of Japanese extraction is very perplexing and requires much study and examination.

I think that evacuees might be used for agricultural work on private farms, on a voluntary basis, provided there are proper safeguards to insure against anything that might smack of peonage.

We have in Arizona state statutes prohibiting the leasing or ownership of land by persons who are not eligible for citizenship. This law, if properly enforced, appears to give us the necessary protection against Japanese acquiring land. We find, however, that title is often invested in children, or other relatives of alien Japanese, who are citizens. This is a complicated legal problem.

In reply to your twelfth suggestion, I would strike the word, "white." We have many colored agricultural workers in Arizona who are citizens and entitled to the work preference due such citizens.

With best wishes and kindest regards, I am

Sincerely,

G o v e r n o r

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